

**SUMMARY OF THE  
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING  
DECEMBER 10, 2001**

The Quality Systems Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on December 10, 2001, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Dr. Fred Siegelman of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Chairman, led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the outcome of the NELAC-7i Conference Quality Systems' session.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Dr. Siegelman reported on the NELAC-7i Conference and the outcomes from the Quality Systems' session as follows.

**TOPICS OF DISCUSSION**

***NELAC-7i Conference Summary***

**ISO 17025**

The ISO 17025 document was well received by the conference attendees. The issues and concerns related to this topic were:

- (1) the inconsistent use of language by the NELAC and ISO 17025 Standards, where a term may have been used with one meaning in the NELAC Standard and a different meaning in the ISO Standard;
- (2) the need to provide definitions of terms used in ISO 17025, and in the NELAC Standard that are not defined in the NELAC glossary;
- (3) renumbering of Chapter 5 to match ISO 17025 could cause problems in New Hampshire and possibly other accrediting authorities who might have to go through their rule or regulation process. A possible solution is the inclusion of cross reference information between the new and previous versions of the standard as part of the Quality systems standard. Mr. Charlie Dyer has offered to review and update the Cross-Reference document to cite references from the 2001 NELAC Standard to meet the New Hampshire Accrediting Authority requirements. Dr. Siegelman will send him an electronic version of the current cross-reference document; participants in the discussions at NELAC 7i, requested expanding the Measurement Uncertainty language in the Standard to provide direction as to how Measurement Uncertainty should be determined. The Quality Systems Standard historically has stated what the requirements are and not how to achieve them. Dr. Siegelman will send a request through Ms. Jeanne Hankins to the Accrediting Authorities requesting their opinion on what level of detail should be in the standard, the preferred way to calculate Measurement Uncertainty and how to handle the

distinctions between Laboratory Measurement Uncertainty, sampling Measurement Uncertainty and total Measurement Uncertainty; and

- (4) the discussions at NELAC 7i also touched on items that are not proposed changes to the standard but are in the existing standard such as the requirement for two positives standards and a blank and how to calculate the LCS.

### **Performance-Based Management System (PBMS)**

This topic was discussed by the conference attendees and the opinion was stated by several participants in the discussion that the PBMS will not be ready for vote at the NELAC-8 Conference.

The need for a tiered system and concerns about subjecting all methods including existing methods to the same validation requirements were raised. The discussions also raised the point that as ISO 17025 is written, ISO 17025 and PBMS are consistent and all that may be required is direction in the Standard on validating non-standard methods, laboratory developed methods and modified standard methods.

### **Asbestos**

There was discussion at the conference regarding the relationship of NELAC with other existing accrediting authorities. Dr. Siegelman will refer this topic to the Accreditation Process Committee. There was clarification made that it is the job of Quality Systems to write the Standards and up to the Accreditation Process Committee to determine how to relate them to the other AA bodies.

### **Microbiology**

Ms. Betty Boros-Russo will draft language to be reviewed by Ms. Marty Casstevens for presentation to the AAs for their input.

### **Committee Volunteers**

There have been several volunteers to work on the Quality Systems subcommittees.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The teleconferences are in the process of being scheduled. Quality Systems will schedule two a month with the first to be scheduled the week of January 7, 2002. Dr. Siegelman will notify the committee when teleconference information has been confirmed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Dr. Siegelman adjourned the meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS  
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING  
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<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date to be Completed</b>
1	<b>Update Cross-Reference table (Siegelman/Dyer)</b>	ASAP
2	Microbiology draft language to Casstevens (Boros-Russo)	ASAP
3	Request Measurements Uncertainty language interpretation from AAs through J. Hankins (Siegelman)	ASAP
4	Refer Asbestos issue to AP Committee (Siegelman)	ASAP
5	Schedule Quality Systems 2002 teleconferences and notify committee of dates (Siegelman)	ASAP

**PARTICIPANTS  
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING  
December 10, 2001**

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